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*An Analysis of
Tournament Play*



by William T. Tilden 2nd

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No. 104R

The Expert

BY
Wm
WILLIAM T. TILDEN, 2D
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Illustrations of
Tilden, Johnston and other prominent players in action
with critical comment by

SAMUEL HARDY
Captain Davis Cup Team, 1920

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INTRODUCTION

As Captain of the American team that invaded England and New Zealand in the successful effort to regain possession of the Davis Cup, the writer has had unusual opportunities to watch the personal application of the principles advocated by Mr. Tilden in this volume.

Mr. Tilden is a great student of tennis, and his own success lies not alone in the perfection of his technique but in his ability to analyze the game of his opponent and to adapt his own strokes accordingly. It is this habit of study, this ability to analyze strokes, that makes Mr. Tilden so successful either as a player or a teacher.

The lesson that he would convey to the players of America is the value of thought quite as much as the value of perfect execution. He himself, is the best example of the co-ordination of these two essential factors, and therefore his instructions possess the merit of being both practical and theoretical.

SAMUEL HARDY.

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PREFACE

When I was asked to write a book to the tennis expert I hardly knew where to begin, for I felt there was so much I had yet to learn.

I do not pretend to know all there is to know of tennis. I believe that the greatest problems of the game have only been sensed by a few great students. Such a man as Norman E. Brookes is far more worthy to treat this subject than am I; yet "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," so I dare to offer my advice on Championship Tennis—its Psychology, Tactics and Training.

Few players realize the great advantage it is to understand crowd psychology. The average player will set down a demonstration of approval or disapproval by a gallery on a purely personal basis. The truth of the matter is, it may be personal or it may be a natural reaction to causes that are not at all personal.

Certain players are always favorites with the gallery and this fact is a decided factor in

their success. I doubt if the players themselves realize how great a part it plays in their success, yet it is the stimulus that provides the needed incentive. Galleries love the sparkling personalities of M. E. McLoughlin and R. L. Murray, and the enthusiasm of the crowd carries those players along with it. Billy Johnston, Wallace Johnson, Watson Washburn and Ichiya Kumagae make their appeal by the businesslike manner in which they play the game. The crowds spur them on by taking them very seriously. Dick Williams catches a crowd by his cheery manner and inconsequential air on the court, but in my opinion this attitude often gains him the gallery and robs him of extreme concentration on his match, because the crowd demands the other of him.

“Chuck” Garland and Vinnie Richards appeal to a gallery through the spirit of youth that they radiate, and the crowd invariably will spur them on through its keen desire to see the youngster win.

W. T. T., 2d.

CHAPTER I

WHAT THE GALLERY DEMANDS

What do we learn from all these players, of the things in tennis that a crowd demands? What is it that wins popularity? It is always easier to play before a friendly audience than a hostile one, and for that reason a match player might as well study the situation.

The crowd demands:—

1. Good sportsmanship. That goes without saying and needs no comment.
2. Determination and a willingness to give of a player's best.
3. Modesty, generosity and good nature.
4. Individuality.

Be natural and you will catch your crowd. They may at first claim you are conceited, but as they come to know you they will recognize the difference between pose and self-expression.



William T. Tilden, 2d, is a master of all styles of play and a bewildering variety of strokes. He habitually interchanges his topspin drive with heavily undercut slice, uses one of a dozen different services, and varies the length and pace of his strokes so that his opponent is never quite sure what to expect. Tilden possesses uncommon fleetness of foot and an extraordinary reach and suppleness. Combined with this unparalleled equipment is a tennis brain of the first order, which makes him quick to discern, and to profit by, the mistakes of an opponent. Photo by Levick.

The American gallery is always for the under dog. If you are beating a prominent player you must make up your mind that the sympathy of the gallery will be with him.

Do not think this sympathy is a personal disapproval. It is not. It is merely the desire to see the loser make a game fight and the match a close battle.

Keep your head and your temper and play your own game regardless, and you will get a square deal.

Bad temper over decisions always puts a player in wrong. I know, for it is an old failing of mine and one which I have striven long—and I hope successfully—to overcome. The crowd dislikes a grouch and very justly shows its disapproval.



WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON

WILLIAM T. TILDEN, 2D

Tilden and Johnston, America's victorious doubles team in the 1920 Davis Cup matches. Note the aggressive action, both men advancing to the net after one of Johnston's forcing drives. Each man is eagerly following the ball's flight and preparing for a "kill" at the net in the event of a return.

CHAPTER II

AVOID WORRY

Do not worry over your opponent's good shots or the breaks of luck. Give him full credit for the good ones and grin at the breaks. To do so will gain you the sympathy of the gallery, while to do otherwise only will upset you and possibly prejudice you with the audience.

The crowds that attend tennis matches in America are always fair and just. Fair play is part of the athletic tradition of the American nation. At the same time they are partial. They always pick a favorite and back him. If they pick you, turn it to your account and gain the full inspiration from their favor.

If they choose the other man, do not take it as a personal insult, but play your match cheerfully, generously and to the best of your ability, and you are assured of a fair deal and stand an even chance of swinging the crowd to you.

From the purely personal angle, it never pays to worry about the breaks of luck. A bad break



Norman E. Brookes serving. Position of arm and racket, well away from body, indicate a twist service with considerable break. Left foot is coming into court after delivery of service, as he starts for the net. As will be noted, Brookes is left-handed.

of luck never can cost more than the point itself, but the resultant worry may lose you several others. Therefore, if a lucky netcord shot or a bad decision costs you an important point, forget it at once and do not brood over it, lest it cost you the game or set in the future.

Concerning bad decisions in match play: If a player once gets firmly fixed in his mind the fact that they are always bound to occur in some degree and that they are only the result of error and never of deliberate intention, his resultant anger will be much less. The best of linesmen make mistakes, and although it hurts to have a perfect shot taken from you, just remember it was unintentional and forget it; then go in and win the next point.

Many a great match has been lost by one man losing his temper at a bad decision after he had the match as good as won.

Match play is a battle of wits always, and anything that tends to cloud or dwarf your judgment, such as worry, anger, discouragement or nervousness, lowers your morale and injures your chances.

CHAPTER III

NERVOUSNESS AND TRAINING

Just a word on nervousness. Any athlete who goes into a big game without a feeling of nervousness before the start is not fit to play. We have the words of such famous trainers and coaches as the late Mike Murphy, the famous University of Pennsylvania track coach; Walter Camp and others. The player always feels nervous if he is keen, but that nervousness should leave him once he steps on the field of battle.

Nervousness is a sign of keenness. Keeness is the result of correct training. Training means the difference between staleness and keenness and is therefore a vital necessity to any player who desires to succeed. A tennis player who desires to stand the strain of a long, hard tournament season must train—or fail.

Staleness is *mental*, not *physical*. Its cause is mental, its effect physical. Training requires just as much psychology as it does exercise.

Most men seem to think there is no halfway mark in training between the life of wine, women and song and the foolish restrictions of the college training table. To forego the former is not training. It is only common sense. To attempt the latter and play tennis is folly. A midcourse is open and should be set.

Where a man is attending primarily to business and playing some tournament tennis on the side, the resultant balance, while a little too heavy toward business so that tennis naturally suffers, supplies the needed diversity of thought to avoid staleness. This man may be under-exercised and under-practised, but he never will be stale.

CHAPTER IV

ADVICE TO THE TOURNAMENT
PLAYER

The player who is over-tennised is the one who goes stale. To the player who is playing tournament tennis all summer I am offering the following few suggestions:—

1. When on the court, tennis is the primary object in your life. Once through your match, forget tennis, if possible, until you again take the court.

2. Have at least one other interest equally important to you and turn to it regularly, so as to keep the mental balance necessary to prevent staleness. I suggest the theater, music and the movies for amusement, while golf, bridge or automobiling afford excellent relaxation from the strain of tennis. Golf is fine during a period between tournaments, but do not try to play it at the same time as tennis, for it seriously affects your game.

3. Eat well, wisely and at regular intervals. Do not worry about "training table" diet except immediately preceding big matches. Then eat only plain, hearty food and not too much of it.

4. Get plenty of sleep. Retire at a normal hour. Do not force yourself to go to bed at an abnormally early hour, but suit your inclination. Arise when you see fit. Be natural in your actions and do not force yourself to follow an unnatural schedule.

5. Naturally, alcohol in any form is rank suicide to a match player, and tobacco should be avoided during the hardest strain, as it shortens the wind and slows up the eye.

The keynote of successful training is normality of living, avoidance of worry and too great a concentration of thought on the matter at hand.

If a player will follow these few principles I believe they will carry him through the hardest season. I found them eminently successful during the Davis Cup trip of 1920.



The topspin drive of Robert Lindley Murray. An admirable example of the "lift" drive, also employed by Kumagae. The racket is brought up sharply on the near side of the head and does not cross the body. Note the forward movement of the body, weight on the proper foot and "eye on the ball." The body is not turned sideways sufficiently. Murray is a left-handed player.

CHAPTER V

CONSERVATION OF ENERGY

At this point let me take up a question that is closely relative to the foregoing, and that is the conservation of energy during any given match.

The great majority of tournament players never give the matter of reserve energy even a thought. The reason is that it is seldom they are engaged in a match sufficiently hard to force them to the limit. Yet, in the ultimate issue of many a championship match, it is the man with the reserve who, in the final games, can call forth an added bit of speed, that brings home the victory.

It is the lack of a reserve that has cost Robert Lindley Murray many a close match. It is the loss of a part of this reserve through the insidious approach of age that today beats Norman Brookes. It is the ability to bring forth this reserve in the final crisis that wins for Billy Johnston and Dick Williams.

It is the formation and conservation of this reserve on which I would dwell.

A player must be extended to the limit and meet defeat before he has any adequate gauge of his game. Once that is done, then he knows just what he is capable of producing in the crisis. It is for this reason that I always urge boys to learn to play five-set matches while young.

Having once found your limit, you should play all matches possible well within yourself. Your tennis life will be much longer. It does not matter how badly you beat a man, provided you beat him, and the danger of extending yourself to the limit daily is that when the big test comes you will have expended all your reserve and have nothing left.

If, however, you meet a player who is playing you even or beating you at your average game, never fail to be willing to play to the last ounce of strength in your body and breath in your lungs and let the future take care of itself, for unless you call out your best and

win this match, there will not be any future for which to make reservations.

If you are two sets up in a three-out-of-five-set match, having gained them both by a close score, do not call on your reserve for the third set. Win it if you can by your regular play, but make your victory certain by running your opponent as far as possible, since he must call out his all now or never, to have even a chance. Then, should you lose that set, call on your best for the fourth, and take it.

The best way to conserve your energy in a match is to cut out all unnecessary steps. Let your ball boy do your work for you when you want a ball. Take your time between points, but *do not stall*. *Never chase an absolutely hopeless shot*, but always go to the limit for any shot you have a reasonable chance to reach.

The effect of remarkable recoveries on the other man's game I deal with in a later portion of this book.

One of the greatest conservations of energy in a long match is that of putting your first service into court.

The amount of labor wasted by players throwing away a first service through carelessness is incredible. Sometimes that added bit saved in service may spell victory in the fifth set.

Norman E. Brookes, with his quiet catlike movements, unhurried walk and ever-alert manner, is a perfect example of the energy-conserving player. You never see Brookes needlessly chase a shot or waste an unnecessary step in reaching the ball. No flurry or hurry in his movements. He never seems to travel quickly, yet he is always in front of the ball. He is a marvelous example of a great match player.

CHAPTER VI

PSYCHOLOGY OF TENNIS

Championship tennis is fundamentally psychology. It is not racket work. The stroke equipment among the first flight players varies greatly as to style, but it is adequate in all cases. Even though there are noted players who have not orthodox games, notably, Wallace F. Johnson, with his chop stroke; Watson M. Washburn, with his "slap drive" and Ichiya Kumagae, with his "loop drive," there are none who need to worry seriously over the mere matter of hitting the ball. In other words, it is not the question of *how to hit it* that is the big factor of championship tennis. It is *where to hit*, and *why*, that counts.

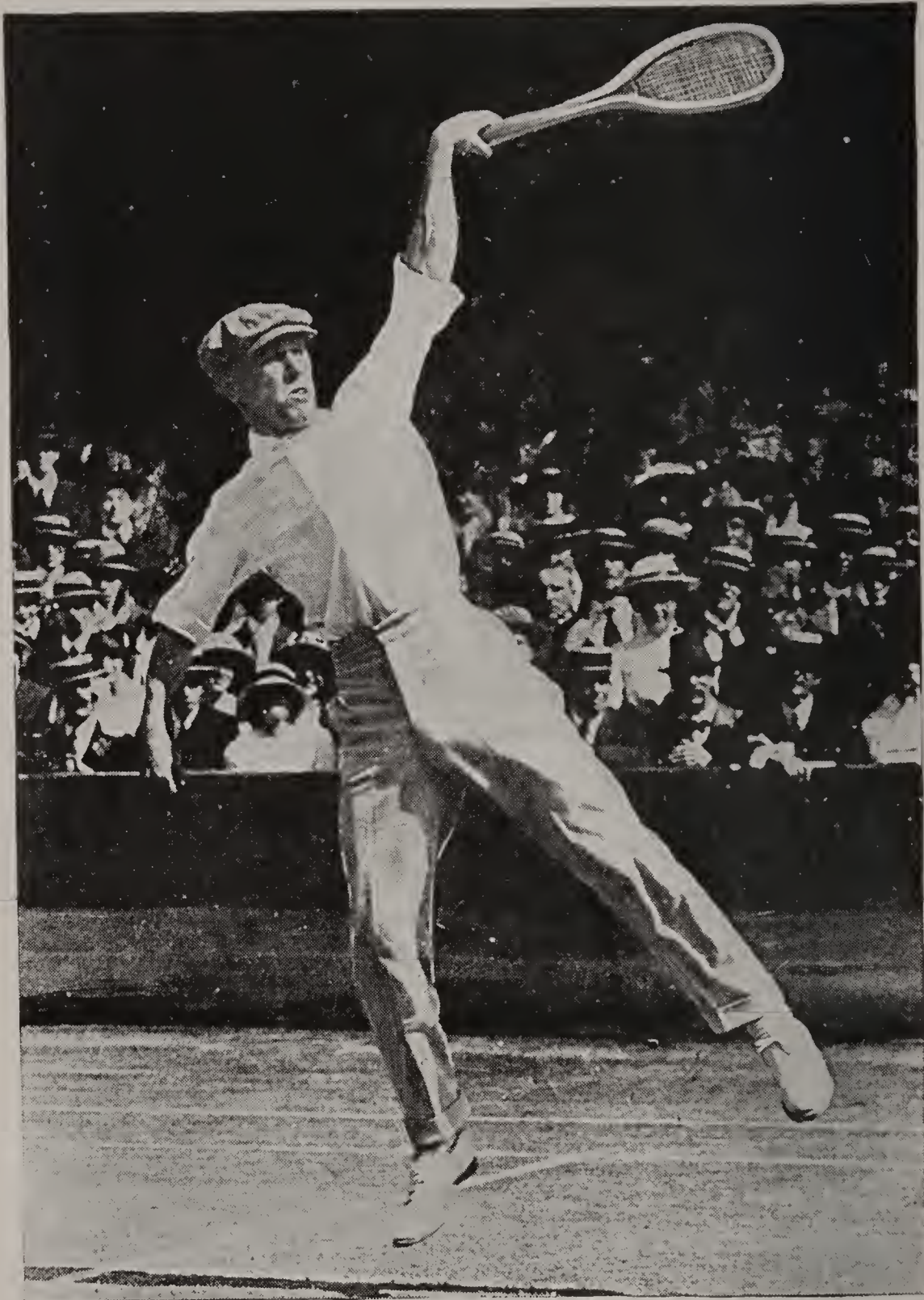
For that reason I will discard entirely all questions of stroke technique and footwork, since I am taking it for granted that my readers are familiar with all there is to tell concerning these, and I will discuss tactics, generalship and psychology.



Willis E. Davis watching the direction of his baseline chop to the backhand. He has had to run to reach the ball and the body weight has followed to the right foot. Note the "Western grip" of the racket.

Personally, I believe that matches are won by the brain and not by the brawn a player possesses. If I once can feel I have broken my opponent's confidence I am convinced I will win. I always realize I am in danger so long as my opponent is trying the unexpected, because it tells me he is still confident and keen.

A beaten man is always obvious in defeat. The dangerous player is the man who grows mentally keener the closer defeat approaches him. Such a player is found in the person of William M. Johnston, Wallace F. Johnson or Watson M. Washburn. These men are never so dangerous as when behind, and for that reason are great match players.



A difficult backhand smash by Norman E. Brookes. Both racket and body position indicate a smash to the backhand corner, as does the glance of the player. The ball was taken high and was delivered with force, shown by the muscles of the forearm, the extended racket and the tenseness of the whole body position. A difficult stroke, well executed.

CHAPTER VII

THE MATCH PLAYER

What is it that makes this type of player? It is sheer determination to win. Their motto is, "Always change a losing game," with the result that just when you think you have them hopelessly defeated, they will spring a new method of attack that upsets your whole theory of play.

How is this done? Let me illustrate from some famous matches. In the 1920 Davis Cup contests in New Zealand, Norman E. Brookes, playing William M. Johnston, led the American by one set and 5-2. Johnston had been playing a baseline game up to this point. With defeat staring him in the face, Johnston threw caution to the winds and stormed the net at every opportunity. The sudden change of tactics surprised Brookes. For a moment he faltered. That moment proved his undoing. Johnston pulled even and from then to the end was never seriously in danger.

Another notable example of a sudden change resulting in victory was the famous Johnston-Williams final match of the 1916 American Championship, only this time Johnston was the victim. Williams, who was trailing 0-3 in the fifth set, changed his net attack to a brilliant, sustained driving game that pulled out the match.

There are innumerable matches that could be cited, but they all merely prove the value of the motto, "Always change a losing game," and its equally important converse corollary, "Never change a winning game."

CHAPTER VIII

CHANGING ONE'S GAME

There are several ways of changing a game:

1. Change your general style.

That is, if you are losing from the baseline, change to a net game, or vice versa.

2. Change the pace of your game.

If you are losing because you are hitting too hard and thus missing your shots, slow up and play the more cautious style of pat-ball. On the other hand, should your opponent be reaching your shots easily at the net and killing them because they are too slow, throw away a little accuracy for increased speed.

3. Change your stroke.

If your drive is not working, try your chop. Should your chop be hopelessly off, change to a drive.

Lest I be accused of giving absolutely impossible advice, let me say here that I am not



Backhand volley by William T. Tilden, 2d. Note suppleness of body, the perfect balance, the upward flight of the ball, followed by the glance. Compare Alonso's low backhand volley.

advocating Wallace Johnson, who is a purely chop stroke player, discarding it for a drive, which he cannot play at all, just because he is facing defeat. I am advising the change to those players who have both strokes, but neither one in a marked superiority. The change-of-stroke style is not so important as the court position change or pace change.

The question of when to change your game puzzles many players. In a two-out-of-three set match, one set and a material lead, such as 3-1 or 4-2, against you, is ample proof your game is a losing one and you might just as well discard it.

On the other hand, a set down, at 6-3, resulting from one break of your service, while your opponent, who served first, held his, is no proof your game will not win in the end, so stay with it.

One break of service may be due to luck, and is no sign of inferiority; but two or three breaks indicate a need for a change of method. In a five-set match it requires two sets to signify that your game is bad and needs a change.



The famous Spanish player, Alonso, intercepting an attempted pass on his backhand at the net. Position of racket and ball indicate a successful return. Note how wrist is turned back in order to give necessary upward slant to racket. Right foot should be in advance of left. Because it is not, the whole body is twisted in order to bring right shoulder forward.

CHAPTER IX

IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING TO THE
SCORE

Changing one's game is so closely allied to playing to the score that I am now going to consider this point. I consider playing to the score the most important point in match play, from the standpoint of effect on your chances.

In a two-out-of-three-set match, the first set is the big advantage for which one should strive. In a three-out-of-five, it is two of the first three sets.

In any given set, the crucial games are usually the fifth to the seventh, inclusive, although one should strive to gain an advantage to consolidate at that period, by gaining two of the first three or three of the first four games played.

Admitting a lead of 3-1, the server should bend every effort to make that 4-1, which practically insures the set. A 4-1 lead is very big and produces a corresponding depression

on the other man while increasing your own confidence. On the other hand, a break of service results in 2-3; that requires only holding delivery to pull even at 3-all.

The same argument applies to 4-2, which means the 5-2, and so often results, through carelessness, in 3-4.

Many players forget that one break of service costs a two-game lead. It is usually lost if you drop your own delivery once. In reality, you should consider it only as one game. You can see readily how much more important 5-2 is to you than 3-4, yet a player at 4-2 is apt to be very careless through a mistaken feeling of security, and not put forth the special effort necessary to meet the increase in intent to win by his opponent, who must pull out that seventh game to have a chance for the set.

The second and third points of the game, particularly the latter, are the vital points. They are the difference between 30-0, a big advantage, or 15-all, which is none, or 30-15 and 40-0.

A player at 30-0 thinks he can afford to take a chance on the next point, yet if he loses it his

opponent needs but one more point to even the score, while care may well give him 40-0 and three chances for the game.

Play carefully and keep the ball in play on the vital points until an opening is offered. Do not take unnecessary chances merely because you lead at 30-0.

With a 40-0 lead, play your point carefully. If you lose it for 40-15, take your chance then and play the 40-30 point carefully if you fail. In other words, play two points carefully to one on a chance, with the game at stake.

If you are down 0-40, take your chance here and possibly at 15-40, for you stand to lose the game anyway. If you pull to 30-40, do not risk throwing away your effort in pulling up to 30-40 by taking an unnecessary chance, but await your opening before hitting for a kill.

Whenever you have nothing to win and everything to lose, await your opening and do not risk your victory by a rash shot. If you have everything to win and nothing to lose, and you are seemingly hopelessly lost, then take your chance and hit to win.



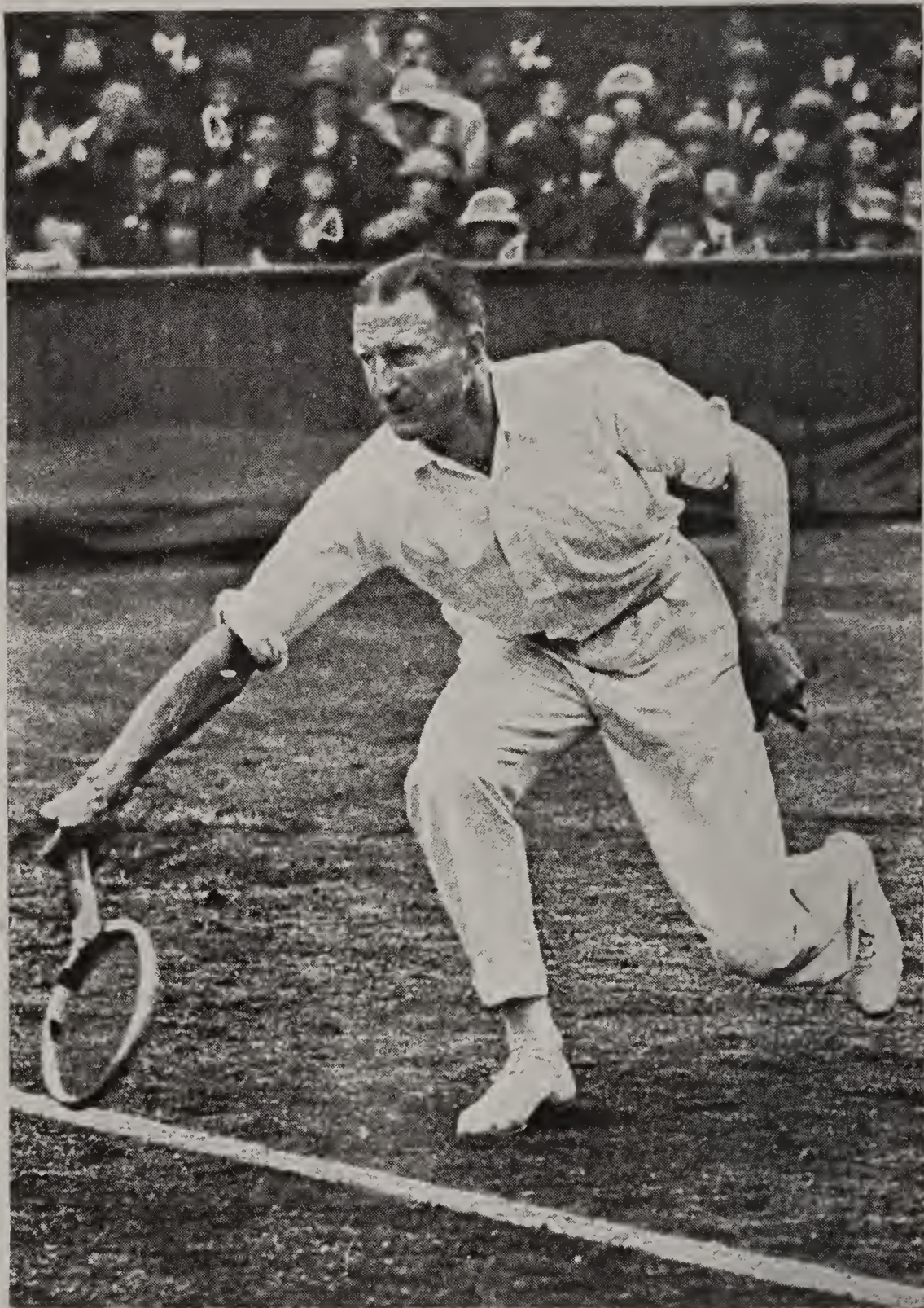
Howard Voshell volleying. Note the position of the feet, perpendicular to the net, the left shoulder forward, the crouched position, bringing the eye nearer the level of the ball. Another left-handed player.

CHAPTER X

TURNING LOSING SHOTS INTO
WINNERS

Few players realize the importance of the shots they miss. The psychology of the shots we miss is just as important as that of the shots we make.

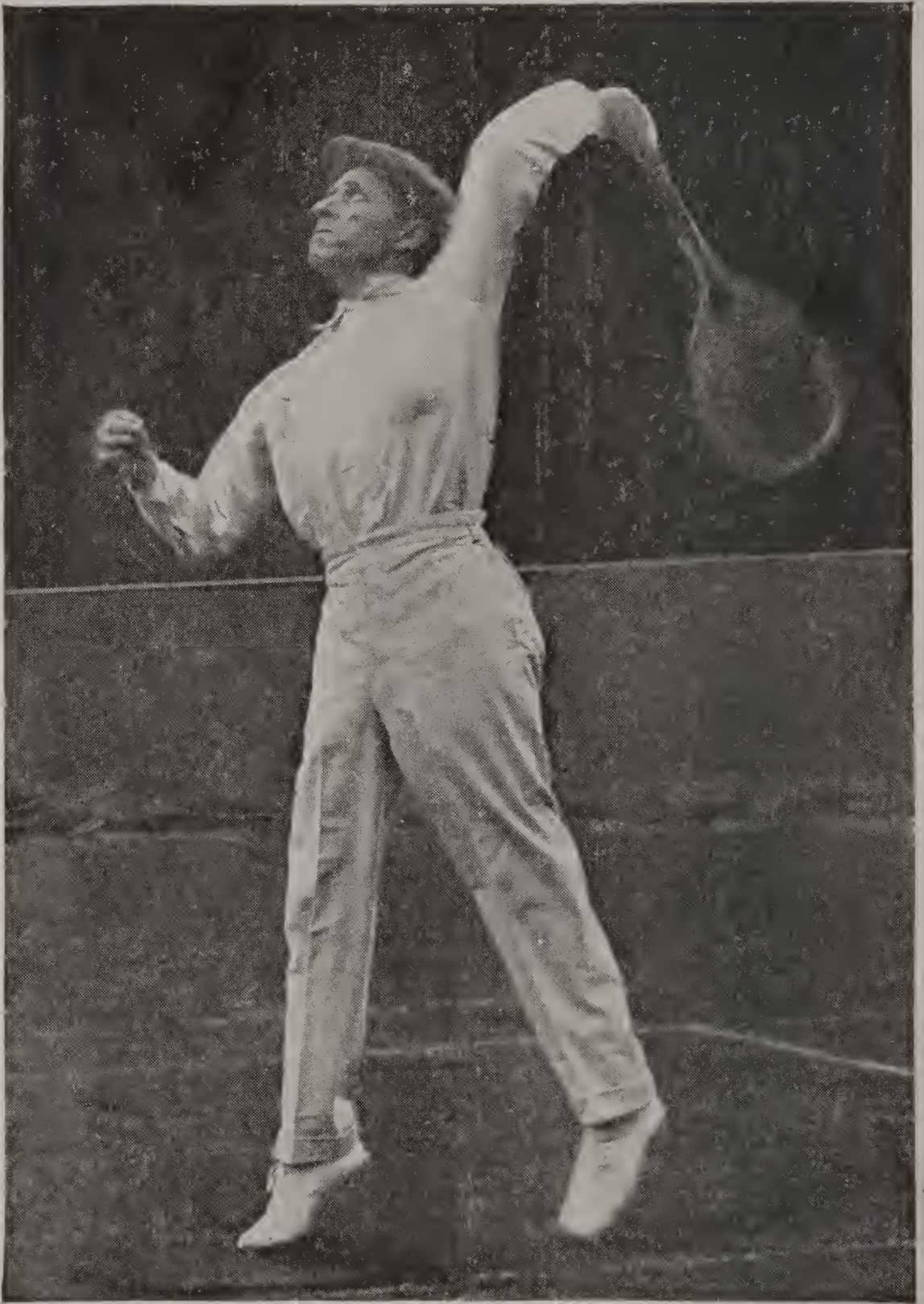
All players know how discouraging it is to play a man who reduces his errors to a minimum. The eternal return of the ball annoys a player tremendously in a hard match. It shakes his confidence; yet think how far more upsetting it is to a player to have one of his best shots reached and aced after he has considered the point won. Now, you will not get all the recoveries you try for. Remember this: If you get to a seemingly impossible return hit it to win outright. It is only in that way you have a chance. Should you get away with it, you have won a point that really was already counted for the other man.



Typical English backhand of F. Gordon Lowe. Note the right angle between the arm and racket, in contradistinction to the American method, in which the arm and racket are in one straight line. Lowe has just sliced a ball down his backhand alley, his favorite stroke. Note the eye following the ball, the advancing motion of the body, and the weight on the right leg.

You have scored twice, for you have upset his confidence and at the same time turned a certain loss into a point for you.

Yet it is not the ones you make that count the most, for you will only make about one in six or seven. It is the shot you *almost* make that counts. The near-winner that causes your opponent to expect the return and look for it next time, with the result that he may miss a weak return while expecting a hard one, is a valuable asset to a match player. That is the reason I try for every shot I can reach with my racket. How often do we see a very important point lost by a player netting a seeming easy kill. The answer is, he was expecting a hard return of a type his opponent had *almost* made from the same place once before, and the easy return fooled him.



Norman F. Brookes smashing. The body position is perfect and indicates a well controlled balance. Note the "eye on the ball", weight on right foot and forward movement of the whole body.

CHAPTER XI

WINNING ON OPPONENT'S
WEAKNESSES

The keynote of match play is to destroy your opponent's confidence and break up his game. You can not win outright enough points to defeat him. You must win on his errors. Anything that tends to break up his game is of value to you.

The methods to follow are:—

1. *Always force your opponent to play a shot he dislikes.*
2. *Never give him his favorite stroke.*
3. *Always pound a weakness.*
4. *Never admit your own weakness by attempting to run around it.*

Let us consider these carefully in that order.

1. Always force your opponent to play a shot he dislikes.



Vincent Richards making a remarkable return at the net. The ball has almost passed him, yet his racket is in position to return the ball to his opponent's backhand. The body position and that of the left and right arms are perfect and indicate why Richards is able to make such marvelous returns as this.

It is not so much the particular shot that is weak that I am treating here as the style of game to use.

If you find a player has a hole in his game on low shots, chop to him.

If he is a net man with a weakness overhead, lob to him repeatedly.

If he is a hard hitter he will like speed, so change your pace and play pat-ball.

The point I am making is, play him with your head more than with your racket and strive to force him to play his strokes off a return that never gives him the ball where he likes it.

2. Never give your opponent his favorite shot.

This is the converse of the former motto. If a man has an outstanding strength, stay away from it, just as it is obvious to pound a weakness.

There are exceptions to this rule, however. If a player has an outstanding strength and

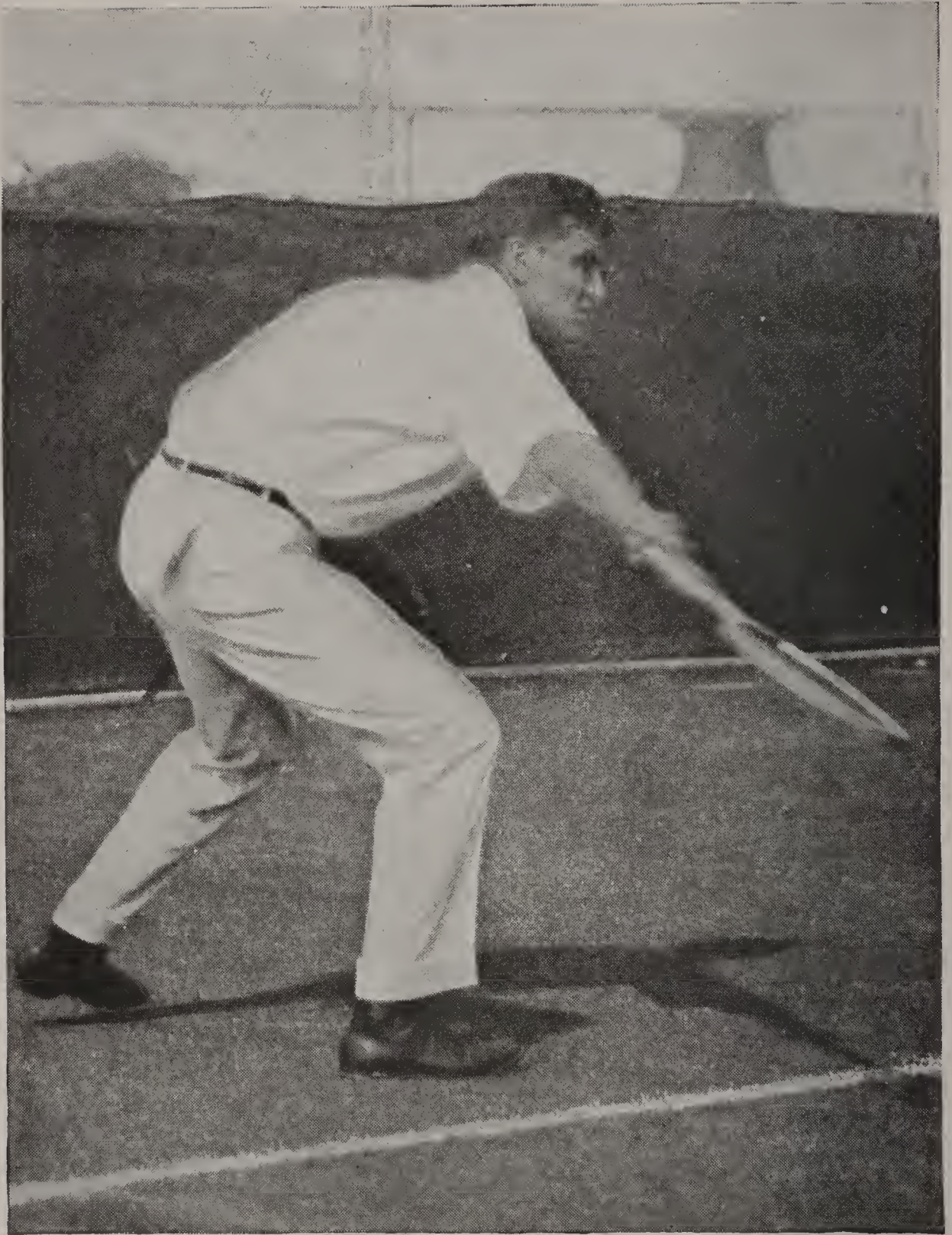


Nat W. Niles reaching for low forehand volley. Racket position indicates that he will return the stroke straight down the line. Note "Eastern grip" and the great reach made possible by its use.

a corresponding glaring weakness, there are times when one must play to the strength to open the weakness. If you do not, the player may so far cover his weakness by standing almost over it, knowing you will not play to his strength, that he has reduced by half the court he must cover and at the same time increased his own best shot, because he has opened the angle into your court. Against this man, play wide to his strength and then shoot fast to his weakness off his return shot.

Excellent examples of players who profited by the fear of their strength to cover up glaring weaknesses, and who should be played to their strength to open their court, are Maurice E. McLoughlin, Wallace F. Johnson, John Strachan and, to a less degree, William M. Johnston, who are all feared for their forehand and thus cover a backhand weakness by running around the ball.

This is not necessary in Johnston's case, for his forehand is used merely by preference, since his backhand is adequate and at all times dangerous.



J. B. Adoue making a backhand crosscourt slice, as indicated by the position of the feet, the glance and the racket, the latter being swung well out to the right.

Theodore Roosevelt Pell is an example of a player who reverses the situation by having his strength on his backhand and running around his forehand. He, too, should be played to his strength, in order to open the court to his weakness.

3. Always pound a weakness.

Every player, no matter how great, has some place in his game that has a fundamental weakness. As soon as you go on the court to warm up against him, search for it. You will find it sooner or later.

The average player of the championship class has a hole in his game, on a deep drive to the backhand corner. Should you find this to be the case, concentrate your attack on that point and force him to play as many shots from his deep backhand as you can put there.

The effect of this will be one of two things: either he will break up under the strain of your forcing attack and miss many shots, or, what is more likely, he will attempt to defend

this weakness by running around it and play the shot on his forehand, thus opening up his forehand sideline. More of that at a later point under No. 4.

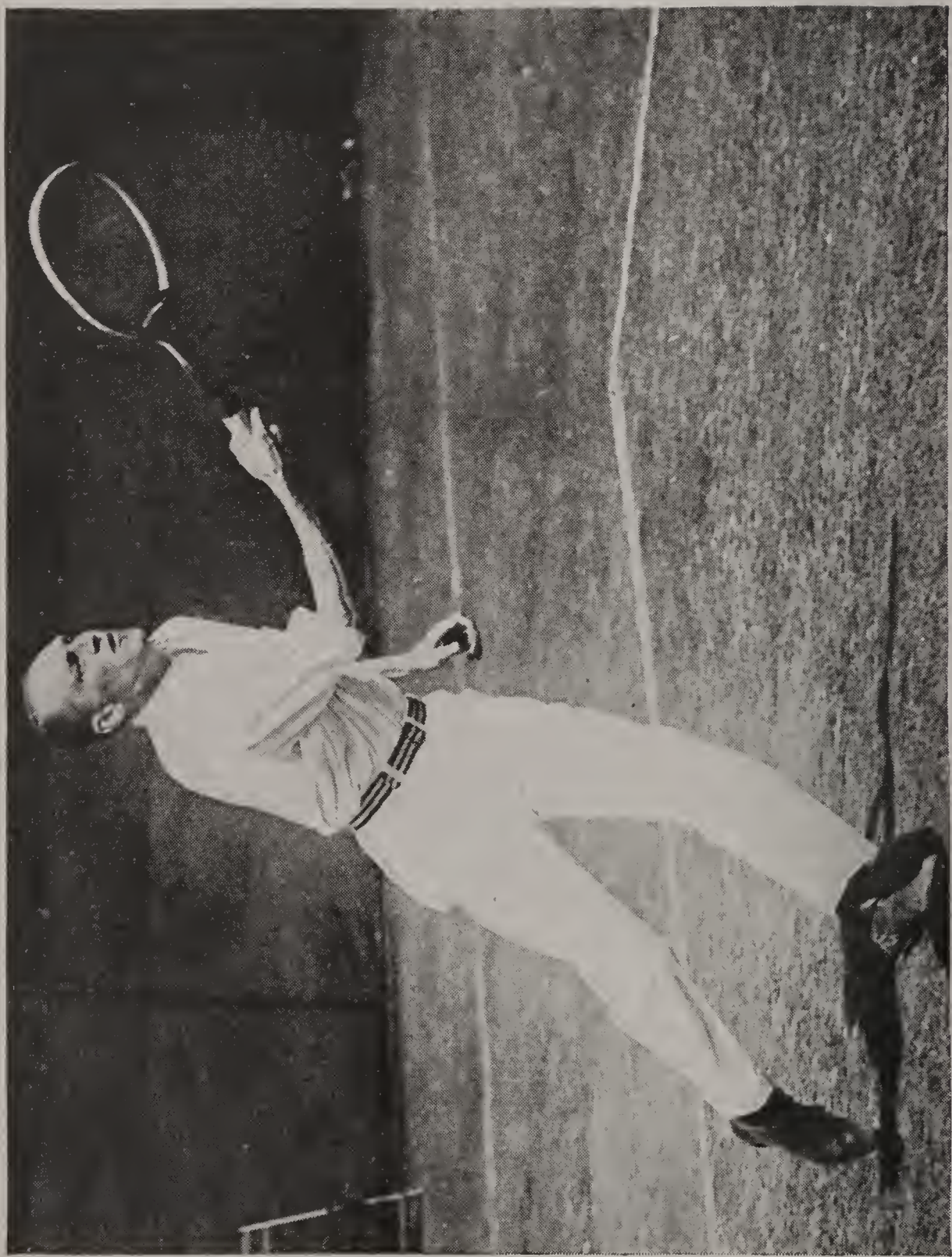
4. Never admit your own weakness by attempting to run around the ball.

The reasons why it does not pay to run around a weakness in match play have been covered in discussing the other three mottos, but the effect of it is something every player should realize. It not only loses important matches for you, because in time someone will get to your weakness, but it lopsides your game. Maurice E. McLoughlin never was the great player William M. Johnston is today, because of the hole he had in his game through running around his backhand. By so doing he never acquired a sound backhand, and once his loss of speed of foot deprived him of his ability to cover court, his downfall was swift and certain.

George Church, Lin Murray, Elia Fottrell and the other exponents of the net attack, with-

out sound groundstrokes, have not been, and never will be, quite first class, owing to the weakness they covered up, yet which beats them in the end.

A weakness only can be overcome by constant, painstaking practise, and running around it, in order to use your favorite shot, leaves a hole in your game that cannot be filled except by stopping that method and working on the correct stroke at the weak point.



Irving C. Wright slicing to the backhand. Note the firm grip of the racket, the eye following the ball and the weight coming onto the left foot, as he follows his stroke to the net.

CHAPTER XII

THE SWING OF THE PENDULUM

No matter how great a player may be, time will produce a greater. Smith of England met his Doherty; Rice of Australia met his Brookes; McLoughlin of America met his Williams, who in turn met his Johnston. So it behooves all tennis players to realize that no matter what their position now, sometime and somewhere they will meet their superior.

Only by retaining an open mind, ready to listen to and try out suggestions, can a player hope to retain his position today. There are so many good players and so many more coming.

What is the ultimate aim? Where is the tennis pendulum swinging? To what goal should we strive?

Tennis is completing a cycle. The game under the English influence of Smith, Gore and the Dohertys, which gave America its Sears, Slocum and Larned, was a splendidly conceived



The Japanese player, Shimizu, making a low backhand volley. The feet are correctly placed, the thumb is back of the racket and the shoulders are at right angles to the net. Note that the racket head is *below* the wrist, in contradistinction to the British method, which insists upon the racket head being higher than the wrist. The body is advancing to meet the ball and his return should leave him in command of the net.

but somewhat mechanical baseline attack. Then came Dwight Davis, donor of the famous Davis Cup, with his new American service and advance to the net.

Holcombe Ward and Beals Wright were products of this period. They were the forerunners of the next epoch, the age of *speed*.

The men I have just mentioned were essentially net players, but based their attack on placement rather than speed.

It was from this period that a tennis genius, twenty years ahead of his time, combining the virtues of all games with the vices of none, burst into the tennis world.

This man was Norman E. Brookes, who, back in 1902, was playing the same type game that is still winning today in his game and that of William M. Johnston. True, Brookes never has had the blinding speed of some players, but for all that he was the pioneer of modern tennis.

In 1909 a meteor shot through the tennis sky and during his brief span of six years of



The Backhand Slice. William M. Johnston making an offensive backhand slice down the alley, his favorite backhand stroke. Note the fully extended arm, the "Western grip" and the body weight on the right foot. The left arm serves as a balance and the eye follows the ball.

leadership Maurice Evans McLoughlin revolutionized the game. He was the missionary of Speed. It was service, smash and volley. The pendulum had swung to its farthest point.

McLoughlin was the antithesis of Gore. For five years all rising young players copied McLoughlin, with the result that the groundstroke became a lost art, while the American service and net attack became world famous.

Then the reaction began. R. N. Williams, 2nd, and William M. Johnston proved conclusively that perfect groundstrokes will defeat the best net attack in the world if it is unsupported by a ground game. For in these two men were combined sound groundstrokes and a net attack with which they followed up the opening they had made with the former.

The cycle was almost closed, "Twenty years from groundstrokes to groundstrokes," if I may paraphrase a famous saying. Yet it is hardly the same. There have been certain changes. The circle will never completely close.



A sliced backhand volley, taken shoulder-high by Frank T. Anderson. The position of the racket seems to indicate a placement to the forehand sideline, but the correct position of the feet and body permit a crosscut shot if desired.

CHAPTER XIII

MODERN TENNIS AN ALL-ROUND
GAME

The modern game is essentially a baseline one. By that I mean the net attack on service is rapidly passing away. Yet the leading exponents of the game, Brookes, Johnston, Williams and Gobert, all use a net attack to finish off the points. They fight for advantage from the baseline and press it home from the net.

The groundstroke itself has changed in character. The old style was a long, flat drive that seldom hit inside the service line and the majority fell within six feet of the baseline.

There was little variety of depth to the old game. The ball was hit on the fall of the bound after it had crossed the crest. The modern ground-stroke is hit with much more topspin so the length and angle may be more varied.

The main change in the stroke has been in the relation of the player to the bounce of the ball. He has moved in on it by several feet and now hits the ball at the top of the bound or on its rise, thus shortening the time and increasing the speed of the game. The modern players use the ground-stroke to open the way to the net. They advance behind it and end off the point with the volley and smash.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FUTURE CHAMPION

Let me outline my idea of the Champion of the Future, summed up in a concrete, composite player:—

1. The Service of Willis Davis.
2. The Forehand Drive of William M. Johnston.
3. The Backhand Drive of R. N. Williams, 2d.
4. The Forehand Chop of Wallace F. Johnson.
5. The Backhand Chop of J. J. Armstrong.
6. The High Volley of R. L. Murray or William M. Johnston.
7. The Low Volley of Vincent Richards.
8. The Overhead of S. H. Voshell.
9. The Half-Volley of R. N. Williams, 2d.
10. The Lob of Wallace F. Johnson.
11. The Footwork of William M. Johnston.
12. The Court Tactics of Samuel Hardy and F. B. Alexander.

Obviously, this mythical player would be a superman; but the point I am trying to drive

home is the fact that the Champion of the Future must have an absolutely all-around game developed to the highest in every department.

The all-court game is just reaching recognition under Johnston, Williams and myself, and we are all far from the perfection of which this style game is capable. Therefore I wish to point out to your expert of today that if he is weak in any department of the game there is yet a future development for him so long as any weakness remains.

It is becoming essential for the leading players to be able to mix a chop and a drive. I believe in making the drive the basis of your game, but using the chop as an alternate.

So let us keep this idea of the all-court, all-star game as our goal and work to combine in one player the qualities that individually have made stars in the past.

The greatest player in the world, no matter who he may be, is capable of improvement so long as health and youth are his. Why not make the most of your chances and be the Champion of the Future!



TENNIS demands the best of every player's ability. The play is hard and fast and keen. To go into a match handicapped by improper or poor equipment is to sacrifice an opportunity to play a better game. Choose your racket, your shoes, your tennis balls or whatever you need with care, looking always for those articles in which you know you can place absolute confidence.

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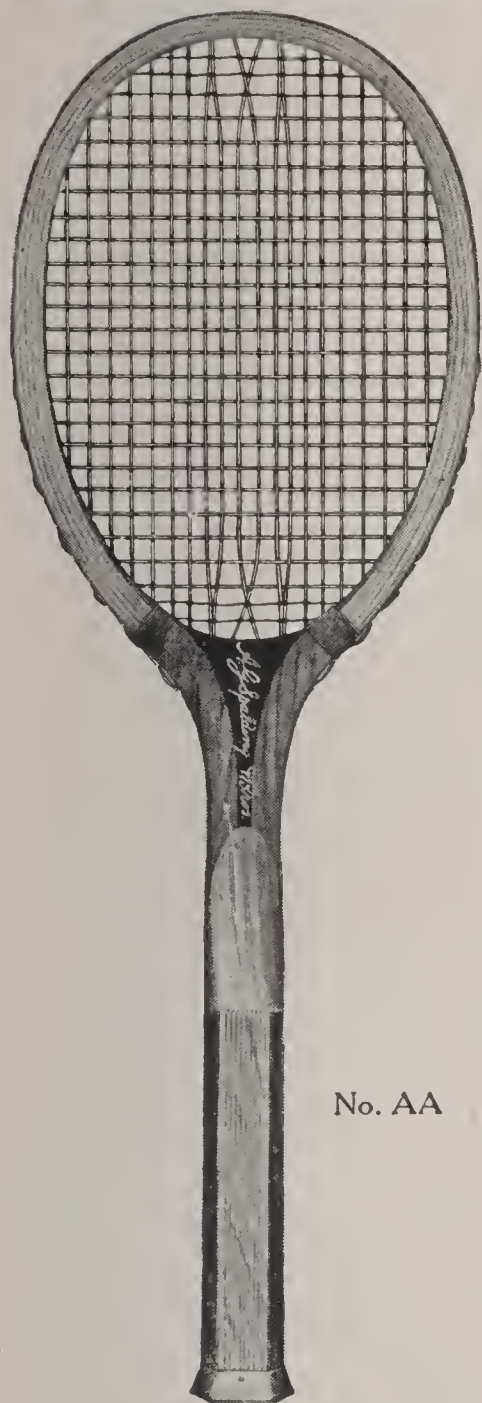
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SPALDING

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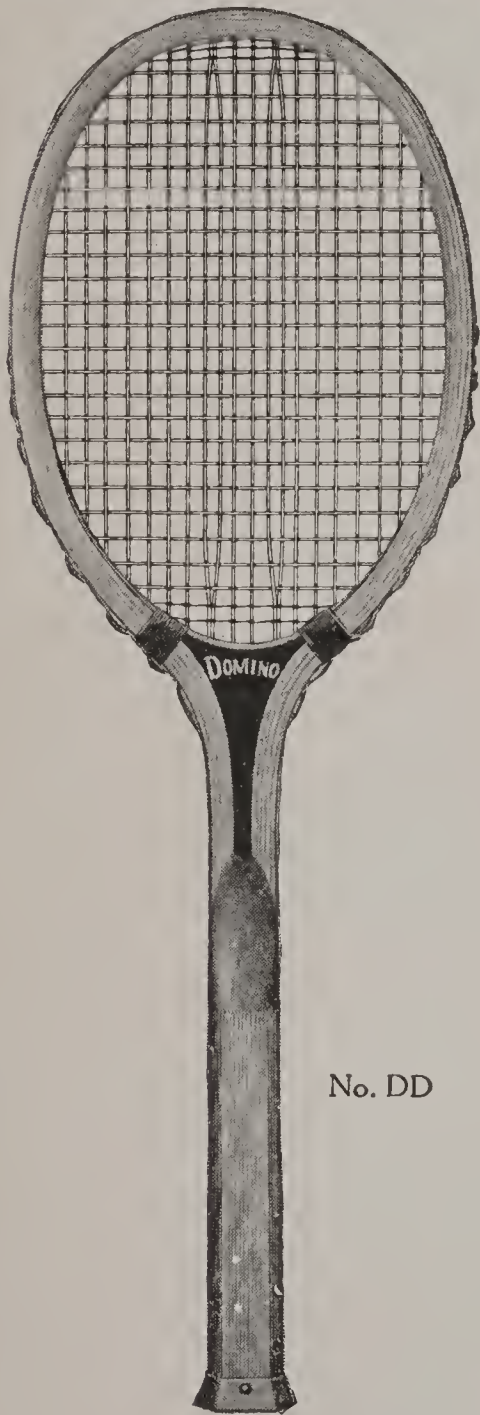
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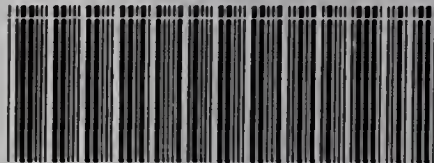
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